vi. A Chromium based third registration plate in form of sticker is to be attached to the wind shield, wherein the number of engine and chassis are indicated alongwith the name of registering authority. If tampered with, it self destructs.

vii. In front and rear registration plates, letter IND in blue colour is hot stamped.

viii. Letters 'IND' in blue colour on extreme left centre of the plate.

The objective underlying the scheme is to enhance safety of vehicles on the roads through improved visibility as also improved the security of vehicles by introducing a number of security features in Registration Plates, which would make removal, tampering or counterfeiting of such plates difficult.

The cost of the Plates would be known only after the selection of vendors by the States is completed.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Already registered vehicles have been given a lead time to two years i.e. upto 31st May, 2007 to switch over to the new High Security Registration Plates.

High Berthing Charges in Shipping Industry

2603. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the high berthing charges are acting as a negative point in increased shipping activity in the country;

(b) the guideline issued by Government to various port trusts in this regard to maintain a competitive set of berthing charges;

(c) whether Government would take steps to bring down the present rates charged by all major port trusts in the country;

(d) whether it is also a fact that inefficiency and high port charges are suffocating the entire shipping industry; and

(e) the steps proposed to study such hindrances being caused to the development of the shipping sector in the country?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) and (d) Increased shipping activity *inter-alia* is dependent upon growing exim trade, tax regime, availablity to finance for purchase of vessels etc. The berthing charges *per se* are not acting as a negative point in increased shipping activity in the country.

(b), (c) and (e) The Port Tariffs and scale of rates in major ports is fixed by an autonomous Authority *viz*. Tariff Authority for Major Ports (TAMP) which was constituted in April, 1997 under the Major Port Trust Act, 1963. The tariffs fixed by TAMP are ceiling rates. However, Ports have the flexibility to charge tariffs below the ceiling rates. TAMP is presently following cost plus approach for fixing tariff. Endeavour of the Government is to explore if cost plus approach can gradually be replaced by normative approach. The TAMP has constituted a Working Group on normative cost based tariff for container related charges.

Over Bridge on NH in Punjab

2604. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any action plan to reconstruct or construct new over bridges on National Highways; and

(b) if so, the relevant details in respect of Punjab where construction work of new bridges and reconstruction of dilapidated bridges has been approved or is under construction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) Reconstruction/construction of Road Over Bridges on National Highways are taken up depending upon intensity of traffic, availability of resources and inter-se-priority of the works.

(b) New bridges and reconstruction of dilapidated Road Over Bridges in Punjab are being under taken by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) as a part of 4 laning works entrusted to them. Further, ROB at Kurali on NH-21 at km. 26.428 is under construction on Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis.